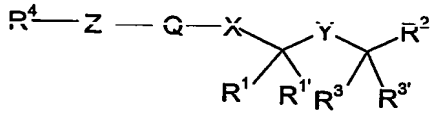
Claims

1. A compound of formula (I):



(I)

Wherein:

Q represents an optionally substituted 5- or 6-membered aryl or heteroaryl ring;

X represents O, S, NR^5 or CR^6R^7;

Y represents CHOH, CHSH, NOR^8, CNR^8 or $CNOR^8$;

Z represents a bond, $CR^{10}R^{11}$, O, S, SO, SO_2, NR^{10}, $OCR^{10}R^{11}$, $CR^{10}R^{11}O$ or Z, R^4 and Q together form an optionally substituted fused tricyclic group;

R^1, $R^{1'}$, R^3 and $R^{3'}$ each independently represents H, C_{1-6} alkyl or C_{1-4} alkylaryl;

R^2 represents CO_2R^8, $CONR^5OR^9$ or NR^5COR^9;

R^4 represents optionally substituted 5- or 6-membered aryl or heteroaryl;

R^5 represents H or C_{1-3} alkyl;

R^6 and R^7 each independently represents H, C_{1-3} alkyl or halo;

R^8 represents H or C_{1-2} alkyl;

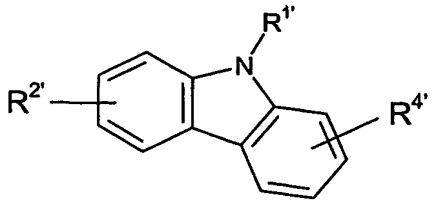
R^9 represents H or C_{1-3} alkyl;

R^{10} and R^{11} each independently represents H, C_{1-6} alkyl or C_{1-4} alkylaryl;

and physiologically functional derivatives thereof, with the exception of 6H-dibenzo[b,d] pyran-3-pentanoic acid (1-dihydroxy-6,6,9-trimethyl), with the provisos that:

when Q represents phenyl; X is O, S or CR^6R^7 where R^6 and R^7 each independently represents H or C_{1-3} alkyl; Z represents a bond, C_{2-4}alkylene, S, SO, SO_2, OCH_2 or CH_2O; and Y represents CHOH, R^4 does not represent phenyl substituted in the ortho position by a substituent X'W' wherein X' is $-NR^1C(O)NR^2-$, $-NR^1C(O)-$, $-NR^1C(O)O-$, $-C(O)NR^2-$, or $-OC(O)NR^2-$ (wherein $R^1$and R^2 are independently selected from hydrogen, C_{1-4} alkyl and C_{1-4} haloalkyl) and W' is hydrogen or a C_{1-12}hydrocarbyl group optionally substituted by one or more groups independently selected from hydrogen, C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{1-4} alkoxy, hydroxy, C_{1-4} haloalkyl and C_{1-4} haloalkoxy; and

when R^4, Z and Q together form a group



wherein $R^{1'}$ is H, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-4} alkoxyC_{1-4} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkanoyl, C_{1-4} alkanoylC_{1-4} alkyl, aryl, arylC_{1-4} alkyl, aryl-C_{1-4} alkoxyC_{1-4} alkyl, arylC_{1-4} alkanoyl, arylcarbonyl, heteroaryl, heteroaryl C_{1-4} alkyl, heteroarylC_{1-4} alkoxy C_{1-4} alkyl, heteroarylC_{1-4} alkanoyl, heteroarylcarbonyl, heterocyclyl, heterocyclylC_{1-4} alkyl, heterocyclylC_{1-4} alkoxyC_{1-4} alkyl, heterocyclylC_{1-4} alkanoyl, heterocyclylcarbonyl, carbocyclyl, carbocyclylC_{1-4} alkyl, carbocyclylC_{1-4} alkoxyC_{1-4} alkyl, carbocyclylC_{1-4} alkanoyl, carbocyclylcarbonyl, C_{1-4} alkylsulphonyl, N,N-di- C_{1-4} alkylaminosulphonyl or N- C_{1-4} alkylaminosulphonyl wherein $R^{1'}$ may be optionally substituted by up to three substituents independently selected from C_{1-4} alkyl optionally substituted by up to three fluro substituents, C_{1-4} alkoxy, C_{1-4}alkanoyl, carboxy, hydroxy, halo, cyano, amino, N-C_{1-4} alkylamino, N,N-di-C_{1-4} alkylamino, C_{1-4} alkanoylamino, mercapto, C_{1-4} alkylsulphonyl, C_{1-4} alkylsulphinyl, C_{1-4} alkylsulphanyl, nitro, heteroarylC_{1-4} alkanoylamino, or C_{1-4}alkoxycarbonyl;

$R^{2'}$ is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-4}alkyl (optionally substituted by hydroxy), C_{1-4}alkoxy, cyano, nitro, halo, amino, N- C_{1-4}alkylamino, or N,N-di-alkylamino;and

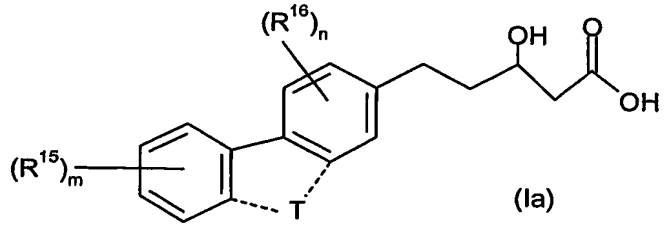
$R^{4'}$ is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-4}alkyl, halo or nitro;

X is NH or CR^6R^7;

Y is CHOH;

R^2 is not CO_2R^8 wherein R^8 is C_{1-2}alkyl.

2. A compound as claimed in claim 1 of formula (Ia):



(Ia)

wherein:

T is absent or represents O, S, NR^{17} or $CR^{17}R^{18}$;

--- represents optional bonds;

R^{15} and R^{16} each independently represents halo, cyano, nitro, OR^{17}, SR^{17}, COR^{17}, $NR^{18}COR^{17}$, $CONR^{17}R^{18}$, optionally substituted phenoxy or C_{1-6} alkyl optionally substituted by OR^{17};

R^{17} represents H, C_{1-6} alkyl or C_{1-4} alkylaryl;

R^{18} represents H or C_{1-6} alkyl;

m and n each independently represents 0 or an integer 1,2 or 3;

with the proviso that when T is absent, R^{15} does not represent $NR^{18}COR^{17}$ or $CONR^{17}R^{18}$ in the ortho position; and physiologically functional derivatives thereof.

3. A compound as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 for use in medicine.

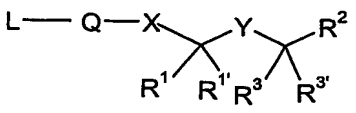
4. A method for the treatment of a human or animal subject suffering from or susceptible to an autoimmune disorder or an inflammatory condition which method comprises administering to said human or animal subject an effective amount of a compound as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2.

5. The use of a compound as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of inflammatory conditions or autoimmune disorders.

6. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound as claimed in claims 1 or claim 2 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier therefor, and optionally one or more other therapeutic agents.

7. A process for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) as defined in claim 1, which process comprises:

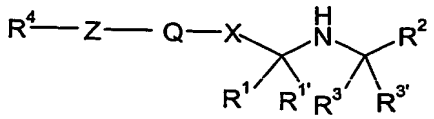
(A) reacting a compound of formula (II):



(II)

wherein R^1, $R^{1'}$, R^2, R^3, $R^{3'}$, Q, X and Y are as previously defined for formula (I) and L represents a leaving group, with a reagent suitable to introduce the group R^4Z; or

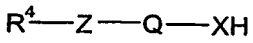
(B) oxidation of a compound of formula (III):



(III)

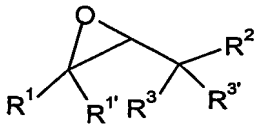
wherein R^4, Z, Q, X, R^1, $R^{1'}$, R^3, $R^{3'}$ and R^2 are as previously defined for formula (I); or

(C) reaction of a compound of formula (IV):

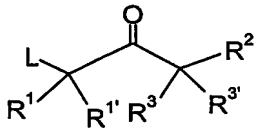


(IV)

wherein R^4, Z and Q are as previously defined for formula (I) and X represents O or S with a compound of formula (VA) or (VB):



(VA)



(VB)

wherein R^1, $R^{1'}$, R^3, $R^{3'}$ and R^2 are as previously defined for formula (I) and L is a leaving group, in the presence of a base; or

(D) interconversion of one compound of formula (I) to another compound of formula (I); or

(E) deprotection of a protected derivative of a compound of formula (I).